

The People's Journal.

PICKENS S. C.

BILL ARP TALKS OF R. E. LEE.

He Met the General on Two Occasions During the Civil War and Was Impressed With His Grandeur.

Atlanta Constitution.

"Duty is the sublimest word in our language." That is what General Lee wrote to his son soon after General Scott offered him the supreme command of the Northern army. Virginia had just seceded and Lee saw on one side that there were no honors to which he might not aspire. On the other side, if he cast his destiny with that of his State, he saw, or he thought he saw, that miseries and trials awaited him without number. But to seek his duty and, having found it, it was ever the principle of his actions. These strong and beautiful words about duty were sent original with General Lee, and in his letter he had them in quotation marks. The expression came from Rev. John Davenport, a famous Unitarian preacher of New England—the man who gave shelter to the three refugees who condemned Charles the First to death and after the restoration fled for their lives to New England and were hidden by John Davenport in his barn. When this act of treason became known among his people he neither quailed nor relented but preached a sermon the next Sabbath from that passage in Isaiah which says: "Hide the outcasts. Betray not him that wandereth. Let my outcasts dwell with thee and he thou covert unto them from the spoiler." It was in that sermon that he made use of this notable expression: "It is my duty to shield them, and duty is the sublimest word in our language."

During the war it was my privilege to see General Lee quite often, but never did I meet him face to face and have a brief conversation with him but twice. Even then we did not know how great a man he was. General Johnston had been wounded at Seven Pines, and General Lee came from West Virginia to take his place. He was almost a stranger to the Army of Northern Virginia. He had been in command but a week or two when General Black, of Rome, came to see his boys of the Eighth Georgia and asked me to ride with him to General Lee's headquarters and introduce him, for he was very desirous of meeting him before he returned to Georgia. Of course I complied, for General Black was a man of no small consequence at home. He was old and gray and of commanding presence and military bearing. Introducing myself first, I presented General Black, and he was seated I said nothing, but paid modest and respectful attention. I was soon impressed with the grandeur of the man before me, and, of course, as he expanded, I very naturally shrank up a little to keep the equilibrium. Not long after this the Seven Days' battles began and ended in McClellan's defeat and our army began to realize how great a man Lee was. It was on the sixth day that I was sent to his headquarters near Meadow Bridge to receive orders, and there I met him again. He was standing, uncovered and unarmed in front of his tent, and "Stonewall" Jackson was asleep inside upon the straw, and the servant had set the dinner tables over him so as not to disturb his rest, for, as General Lee said, "He needs it, and nothing but artillery will awake him now."

I said that the army did not know at first how great a man Lee was. Neither did they know fully at the last, for he was one of the few great characters that develop and grow brighter and grander as the years roll on. For some years after the war he received but little praise at the North, and a great national cyclopedia gave more space and praise to Old John Brown than to General Lee, who arrested and executed him. But now, in the International of fifteen volumes—a standard work, edited and compiled by 200 of the most distinguished scholars and professors of the Northern colleges—the sketches of General Lee and Stonewall Jackson are all that we could ask for.

That of Lee closes with this paragraph: "In person he was one of the noblest types of manly beauty. Tall, broad-shouldered, erect, with a dignity as impressive as that of Washington, yet not so cold. Of habit as pure as Washington, but more warmly religious and always maintaining a calm, confident and kindly manner that no disaster could disturb or change." The world knows him now and venerates his memory and the people he fought against have given him a place in their hall of fame.

Verily, old Father Time is a good doctor and Anne Domini the softening solvent of all malignant passions. But this is enough from me concerning the great commander. It was the sublime Christian faith of Lee and Jackson that made their characters complete and added luster to their military fame. They were men of prayer.

For a little while I would ask your kind attention to those who since 1892 have called themselves the Daughters of the Confederacy. Their mission has been and still is and we trust long will be as declared in article 2 of their constitution: "Educational, memorial, social and benevolent—to collect and preserve the material for a truthful history of the war between the States—to honor the memory of those who served and those who fell in our service and to record the part taken by Southern women during the war and its aftermath, their patriotic devotion during the struggle and to fulfill the duties of sacred charity to the survivors." All of these are noble objects but the greatest of all is the establishing of the truth and preserving it. The p. et. saith that "Truth crushed to earth will rise again," and it has risen and will continue to rise. Even that popular magazine, Frank Munsey's Monthly, in its number, has forever blotted out the malignant and satirical story of Treitchie, and only the last

week the ladies of Lexington, Ky., put under the ban the drama of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It was the Daughters of the Confederacy who did it and to their widespread and influential organization the South must look for the maintenance of the truth. Just think of it. Within the past nine years twenty-two States have been chartered as grand divisions, including California, New York, the District of Columbia, Oklahoma and the Indian Territory. In all these there have been chartered an aggregate of over three hundred chapters with a membership of 26,000 good loyal Southern women. The largest federation of women in the world. Of this membership Texas has the largest number, 2,435, Georgia comes next with 1,750 members. But my friends, the great army of Daughters had mothers who, whether alive or now dead, instilled this love of truth and unstained Confederate honor in the hearts of their children. They are the ones who sacrificed and suffered and still were strong. For more than fifteen years I have observed a trait in woman's nature that is lacking in most men. She never gives up. The sad results of the war that wrecked the fortunes of Southern men hastened thousands of them to untimely graves, but their widows still to the land from Virginia to Texas. The mothers of these daughters endured more hardships and privations than their husbands and sons who were in the army, but they never complained.

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Well, she does want all she can get, and wants it as soon as she can get it, if not sooner, but if she can't have it she surrenders cheerfully and accommodates herself to the situation. During the war they actually smiled at their own pitiful and distressed condition. They buried down the dirt from the smoke house that had long been saturated with the drippings of the bacon and meat and made pretty good salt out of it and divided with their neighbors. They parched rye and gubbers for coffee and sweetened it with sorghum and bragged how good it was. They cut up their old garments and made clothes for their children. Indeed it is always an amusing entertainment to listen to these good old mothers as they recite their makeshifts and their trials after Sherman had passed through on his march to the sea. Not long ago four or five of these matrons by chance met at our house and it was up and back between them as they told of the most amusing experiences. One told how her two boys and a little girl had worn their shoes until they would not hold sticks much less feet and she found an old calf skin that had long been hanging in the barn and had soaked it in lime and red oak bark and got about half the hair off and took it to an old shoe cobbler, and he made three pair of shoes that would hold sticks, and if they fit the children pretty well, but the red hair and she laughed and laughed until the children did not want to wear them, because she laughed so much. That was the origin of tan shoes, though these were made of untanned leather. Another told how two of her children never saw a raisin until they were 5 and 7 years old, and were afraid to eat them, and said they were bugs. Another told how she and her boys built a fence around the garden by boring holes in the plank and the posts with an old brace and bit that her husband left when he went off. And they made pegs and drove them in for there wasn't a nail in the country. But good old Mother Akin, whom everybody loves and likes to listen to, told how three of her neighbors got out of meal and had somehow got hold of three bushels of corn, and they rigged up a little rickety wagon and a blind army mule and all three started to the nearest mill, which was 7 miles away. They started early and got to the creek, and the creek was up, but they drove in, and sure enough the wagon came uncoupled right in the middle of it and let them all down where it was knee-deep, and let the corn down, too, and the mule went on the far shore and never gave up when he got over. But they never gave up about an hour to get the corn and the wagon together again, and with dripping garments they hurried on to the mill. A photograph of the scene would sell as the champion picture of the women of the war. The good miller gave them dry meal for the wet corn, and by sundown they were all at home again and laughed over it and everybody laughed who heard of it. Almost every family within Sherman's belt have fireside stories to tell that would fill a book. They are a curious medley of the sad, the pathetic and the amusing, and excite more fun than

Goldsmith wrote:

"Man wants but little here below,
Not wants that little long."

But some cynical old bachelor paraphrased it:

"Man wants but little here below,
For so the poets say,
But woman wants it all, you know,
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Well, she does want all she can get, and wants it as soon as she can get it, if not sooner, but if she can't have it she surrenders cheerfully and accommodates herself to the situation. During the war they actually smiled at their own pitiful and distressed condition. They buried down the dirt from the smoke house that had long been saturated with the drippings of the bacon and meat and made pretty good salt out of it and divided with their neighbors. They parched rye and gubbers for coffee and sweetened it with sorghum and bragged how good it was. They cut up their old garments and made clothes for their children. Indeed it is always an amusing entertainment to listen to these good old mothers as they recite their makeshifts and their trials after Sherman had passed through on his march to the sea. Not long ago four or five of these matrons by chance met at our house and it was up and back between them as they told of the most amusing experiences. One told how her two boys and a little girl had worn their shoes until they would not hold sticks much less feet and she found an old calf skin that had long been hanging in the barn and had soaked it in lime and red oak bark and got about half the hair off and took it to an old shoe cobbler, and he made three pair of shoes that would hold sticks, and if they fit the children pretty well, but the red hair and she laughed and laughed until the children did not want to wear them, because she laughed so much. That was the origin of tan shoes, though these were made of untanned leather. Another told how two of her children never saw a raisin until they were 5 and 7 years old, and were afraid to eat them, and said they were bugs. Another told how she and her boys built a fence around the garden by boring holes in the plank and the posts with an old brace and bit that her husband left when he went off. And they made pegs and drove them in for there wasn't a nail in the country. But good old Mother Akin, whom everybody loves and likes to listen to, told how three of her neighbors got out of meal and had somehow got hold of three bushels of corn, and they rigged up a little rickety wagon and a blind army mule and all three started to the nearest mill, which was 7 miles away. They started early and got to the creek, and the creek was up, but they drove in, and sure enough the wagon came uncoupled right in the middle of it and let them all down where it was knee-deep, and let the corn down, too, and the mule went on the far shore and never gave up when he got over. But they never gave up about an hour to get the corn and the wagon together again, and with dripping garments they hurried on to the mill. A photograph of the scene would sell as the champion picture of the women of the war. The good miller gave them dry meal for the wet corn, and by sundown they were all at home again and laughed over it and everybody laughed who heard of it. Almost every family within Sherman's belt have fireside stories to tell that would fill a book. They are a curious medley of the sad, the pathetic and the amusing, and excite more fun than

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